



Lexington Field & Garden Club

144 Years of Making Lexington More Beautiful

Member of the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts

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Dear Gardeners,

I invite you to attend our annual **open board meeting** on **March 6 at 9 AM**. We'll discuss our plans for the spring and collaborate on ways to move the club forward. This isn't just my garden club or any other single person's garden club. We have over 320 members, and we want to hear from you. We value your thoughts and ideas, and working together can make our garden club even more successful. I look forward to seeing you at our open board meeting and share

our passion for gardening!

Read on for so much more happening in the Garden Club!

Happy Spring,

Kathy Leva, President

Dates to Remember

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| March 6 | Executive Board Meeting, Lexington Community Center, room 217 |
| March 13 | Monthly meeting with Please do Eat the Daisies with Russ Cohen
6:30 PM, Follen Church |
| March 20 | Deadline for submissions to the April newsletter |
| March 26 | Heather Holm Creating a Bee Habitat with Lexington Living Landscape |
| March 26 | History of Mount Auburn Cemetery with Cary Library |

Coming up in April

Patriots' Day Parade – Save the Date! Monday April 15
2 PM parade. A guaranteed fun time!

Arbor Day, April 26 planning is underway. If you would like to volunteer please reach out to **Kathy Leva** for more information.



March Events

Wednesday, March 6 – LFGC annual open Board Meeting

Join the Executive Board for the annual open meeting. Learn more about all the exciting events and educational programs LFGC is working on in the upcoming months. All are welcome. Please join us at **9:00 AM at the Lexington Community Center, Room 217, 39 Marrett Road.**

Wednesday, March 13 – Please do Eat the Daisies with Russ Cohen

Russ's talk will focus on the non-native weeds and invasive species in our midst. Lexington is home to hundreds of these plant species. There is a growing awareness among gardeners of the need to plant more ecologically-valuable native plants to address the decline in native birds and beneficial insects. What should we do with all those non-native weeds and invasives? The answer could be, for many of them, to eat them.



Wednesday, March 13, **Social at 6:30 PM, Meeting at 7:00 PM at Follen Church, 755 Mass Ave., Lexington**

Tuesday, March 26 – Creating and Enhancing Native Bee Habitat in Your Garden with Heather Holm



There is a great deal that home gardeners can do to provide habitat for our native bees without sacrificing other garden goals. When creating and managing thriving habitats for native bees, many factors such as seasonal phenology, nesting strategies, and flower preferences must be considered—and with approximately 3,600 species in North America (north of Mexico), there are many unique aspects to keep in mind when managing successful landscapes for bees. Heather Holm is a biologist, pollinator conservationist, and award-winning author.

Tuesday, March 26, **7 – 8:30 PM.** The presentation is organized by Lexington Living Landscapes and co-sponsored by the Lexington Field & Garden Club with support from their Grants for Gardeners program. For registration information, go to www.lexingtonlivinglandscapes.org.

Look here for information on the [LFGC Grants for Gardeners](#) program.

Tuesday, March 26 – A History of Mount Auburn Cemetery

Mount Auburn Cemetery was established in 1831 as a designed landscape of exceptional beauty with the purpose of burying the dead and providing comfort and inspiration to the living. Today, Mount Auburn is a busy cemetery as well as a National Historic Landmark, an internationally renowned arboretum and botanical garden, a wildlife sanctuary, important birding site, outdoor museum of commemorative art and architecture, and a beloved natural oasis in the midst of urban development. Curator Meg Winslow will shed new light on Mount Auburn's fascinating history and landscape design.

Tuesday, March 26, **7 - 8 PM. VIRTUAL. [Registration is required.](#)**



Lexington Field & Garden Club Meeting Summary February 7

Social time began at 9:30 am.

Kathy Leva, President, called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

Meeting Participants: Members-37, Guests-10 Total-47

Announcements:

1. Kathy thanked the Greens Party Committee of Ann Webster and Jane Halverson for the Greens Party in December.
2. She also thanked Jane Halverson for the refreshments at the meeting today and Vicki Blake and the Communications Committee for the newsletter and weekly updates.
3. Ann Webster discussed the Plant Sale, which is May 18. The Sale needs more volunteers. Please email Linda Walsh or her if you can help.
4. Upcoming events: We will march in the Patriots' Day Parade, April 15.

Arbor Day is April 26 and there will be a ceremony in which we will participate.

The LFGC Garden Tour will be in June and contact Susan Cass if you wish to participate.

Business-

1. By-laws – The By-laws were introduced by Ann Webster. These had been sent to the membership in January.

The members were asked to vote on these by-law changes. Sarah Moroney so moved; Ruthanne Igoe seconded. The vote was as follows:

Yays-36

Nays-0

Abstentions-1

Total:37

The motion passed.

Kitty Galaitsis introduced the speaker Trevor Smith, who spoke on the topic "Save the Pollinators, Save the Planet."

Trevor is the Design and Education Manager at Weston Nurseries. He holds several landscape certifications and is a past President and current Trustee of the Ecological Landscape Alliance. He is an award-winning regenerative landscape designer, specializing in green infrastructure, native plant design, habitat creation, and the implementation of ecological design principles.

N.B.-The next LFGC Board meeting will be in room 217 of the Lexington Community Center on March 6, 2024, 9:00-11:30 AM. All members, by tradition, are invited to attend this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Heaton

Recording Secretary



Memo from the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts

Flora in Winter is taking place at the **Worcester Art Museum** from February 29 - March 3. Watch art bloom at this special preview, as two arrangements come to life just hours before the Museum opens to the public. GCFM Designers, Ruth Evans and Thelma Shoneman, will create two original interpretations of *Woman at Her Toilette*, giving a unique look into their process and inspiration.

GCFM's Floral Design Workshop is presenting **Parallel Design** with Lisa Pattison, Flower Show Judge, on April 12th from 10AM – 12 PM which will be held In Dedham. [Click here for more details and sign up](#). Cost is \$55

Treat yourself to a trip to the Berkshires over the next few weeks and visit the Fitzpatrick Greenhouse **Berkshire Botanical Bulb Garden** which is running from February 21-March 17th. Admission is free daily from 9 AM – 4 PM.

Member Corner

Welcome to new member **Leslie Fagan!** Leslie is from Lexington and has already jumped in by joining the Monday night group.

Spotlight on member **Rachel Noack Summers**

Rachel, a LFGC member since 2022, has installed a “little free seed library” at 384 Lincoln Street, near her home! This is an idea that has been adopted in communities across the country as a way to share seeds. Rachel’s library includes seeds from native plants, tomatoes from her garden, several varieties of squash, and giant sunflowers from the Hancock Street traffic island, with a thank you to LFGC member **Jackie Lam** and also to Carla Fortnam of the Lexington Interfaith Garden.

Rachel welcomes visitors to take what they can use from the cabinet. If you have seeds you could donate, leave them in her mailbox with as much relevant information about the plant type as possible and she will sort them into envelopes.

Rachel describes her project this way: “Seeds do not need to involve a financial investment. Growing from your own saved seeds promotes biodiversity, locally adapted plant types, and seed sovereignty from the handful of chemical companies that own most of the worlds’ seed trade. Just beware that seeds from hybrid plants are likely not to match their parents, and some plants (like squash) will readily hybridize if they are not grown in isolation. To improve your seed saving odds, stick with open pollinated or heirloom plants vs ones labeled as hybrids. And note that if you take my free seeds, there are no guarantees that they will be exactly as labeled, but what do you have to lose? They are free!”

What a great initiative – good for gardeners and good for the planet!

Reminder on our websites Bookmark <https://lexgarden.org/> and <https://lexgarden-club.membershiptoolkit.com/Home>. Questions? Just ask!



Plants for Giving

E. Ashley Rooney

We all know people who could use something that would brighten up a dreary winter. Right about now, I start forcing forsythia. As soon as it shows just that hint of yellow, I give it to the friend who needs the most cheer. I continue forcing other woody specimens, such as dogwood or redbud, or I just give them a plant that lives much longer.

Clivia

Years ago, I admired a friend's clivia, and she gave me a piece. I now have about eight clivias and keep dividing them to give away. When they bloom, they are magnificent.

I found that if I left them outside in the shade until October and then thrust in my cold attic until mid-January, they bloomed beautifully in early February – just when all the holiday decorations had gone.

Caring for clivias is quite simple. The soil should be kept somewhat moist but allowed to dry slightly between deep waterings. You should fertilize clivias once a month as well. They come from South Africa and like being pot-bound.



Amaryllis

A favorite present for many is an amaryllis bulb, which produces large, eye-catching, lily-like flowers that light up a room. Amaryllis challenges folks suffering from winter doldrums to remember there is brightness even on bleak winter days. They sprout so quickly that you can see them growing.

A tropical bulb native to South and Central America, they are reliable and largely carefree, making them an excellent gift for anyone on your list. The dramatic flowers, which come in many colors, mini to doubles, stripes to ruffles, can be as much as nine inches in diameter and stand up to 3 feet high (I find these need staking). Larger bulb sizes (10 or

more inches in circumference) will result in at least four flower buds, providing a more extended bloom period. They come as bulbs, in pots, or even boxed for easy shipping.

Cyclamens

Many gardeners like cyclamen. Cyclamens come in many varieties and colors. Some have ruffled flowers, some are miniature, but all maintain a large bright flower. Colors include red, pink, maroon, and white. The heart-shaped leaves are green or variegated.

Cyclamens like filtered light and cool nights. Temperatures that are too high will cause the plant to begin to yellow, and the flowers will fade rapidly.

That's why you don't give cyclamens to someone who keeps their heat high: cyclamens prefer a cooler house.

Cyclamens are grown from corms: a short, thickened vertical stem. Their native habitat is the Mediterranean and Southern Europe. In your home, water your cyclamen plant only when the soil is dry to the touch, but do not leave it in this dry state so long that it shows visible signs of not being watered, such as droopy leaves and flowers. When you water the plant, water from



below the leaves so that the water doesn't touch the stems or leaves.

When your cyclamen has finished blooming, it can be discarded, or the corm can be saved. After the foliage dies back, the plant should be left to dry. The corm should then be dug and repotted in midsummer and placed in a warm place to establish roots before returning it to a cool 55-60° F. to encourage flowering.

Jasmine

This handsome subtropical vine will give you a mid-winter display of elegant and exquisitely fragrant white flowers. Cool temperatures and the correct location in a well-lit room or sunny window are important. Good air circulation helps promote jasmine's showy white winter blooms when grown indoors. The plant can tolerate as much as four hours per day of direct sunlight from late spring through fall. Decrease direct sunlight in winter.



Succulents

Aside from being outrageously popular, caring for succulents is pretty straightforward. When grown in the garden, succulents generally need about six hours of bright, indirect sunlight daily. Indoors, you'll want to place your succulents near a window that gets light all day. If this isn't an option, place your succulents near the brightest window or brightest area of your home or office.

Succulents need good airflow to maintain healthy roots, stems and leaves. Provide a very well-draining potting medium. When repotting, use a container with a drainage hole at least one to two inches larger than the nursery container. Avoid glass containers (such as mason jars or terrariums) as they don't allow roots to breathe and can cause root rot over time. Fill the bottom one-third of the container with pre-moistened potting mix, then position your plant inside and backfill with more pre-moistened potting mix.

As long as your loved one can keep a succulent near the sun and doesn't drastically over water, they can probably keep a succulent alive. Succulents come in many varieties, and it's great fun to build little succulent gardens as gifts.

Air Plants

Like succulents, air plants are quite popular these days. These epiphytes can survive without soil, making them perfect for hanging in little glass orbs along windows. They require some careful soaking or misting and occasional fertilizer; otherwise, they're pretty hardy little plants.

If your air plant has fuzzy leaves, you can water it once or twice a week. You must water it more frequently if it has smooth or glossy leaves because this variety of air plants is from a rainforest or cloud forest.

As a general rule, keep your air plants out of direct sunlight. Remember, in the wild, many air plant species like to grow up in the sheltered, shady canopy of trees. So keep your plants in a brightly lit spot away from the direct sun.



**That's all for now, hope to see you at the Board meeting
and the Russ Cohen presentation!**